

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 – 12 are pending in the application.

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claim 6 would be allowable. In conformity therewith, a new claim 12 is being submitted herewith as a combination of claims 1, 5, and 6. However, in view of the following comments, it is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims should now be allowable.

The present application relates to a gear mechanism, for example a power trimmer gear mechanism, having means to protect against wrapping in order to prevent cut or mowed material from wrapping about a shaft of a gear mechanism. For this purpose, claim 1 of the present application requires means to protect against wrapping that are disposed externally of a driven portion of a shaft, and that is rotatable about the shaft portion. As the drive shaft rotates, the means to protect against wrapping and rotate between the side components or can remain stationary. This prevents the cut or mowed material from being able to wrap about the drive shaft.

The Examiner has rejected, among others, claim 1 under 35 USC 102(b) over Bovi. This reference discloses a power tiller gear mechanism, the drive pinion 77 of which has threaded bolts 14. The pinion 77 is mounted in the housing via bearings 15. The ring 18 is threaded onto the bolt 14 and is thus fixedly connected therewith. The rotors 19 and 191 each have a hexagonal hole 201 (see column 3, lines 24-28) into which extends a hexagonal portion of a spacer 192. By means of the hexagonal portions, the spacer 192 is fixedly connected with the two rotors 19 and 191. The entire assembly is clamped together by a threaded rod 300 (see column 3, lines 28

and 29). The torque from the drive pinion 77 is consequently transmitted via the cramping force of the threaded rod 300 to the rotors 19 and 191. The rotors are fixedly connected with the spacer 192. The spacer 192 is hence rotated by the gear mechanism and forms a shaft portion that is driven by the gear mechanism. There is no means to protect against wrapping disposed externally or outwardly of the spacer 192, as required by applicant's claim 1. Since the spacer 192 rotates along with the rotors 19 and 191, it cannot form a protection against wrapping. It is therefore respectfully submitted that since Bovi discloses no means to protect against wrapping, it cannot teach or suggest the subject matter of applicant's claim 1. Nor can this reference teach or suggest how a means to protect against wrapping should be configured.

In view of the foregoing discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the cited reference in no way teaches or suggests applicant's claim 1, and that this claim 1 should therefore be allowable, as should the claims dependent thereupon.

Should the Examiner have any further comments or suggestions, the undersigned would very much welcome a telephone call to discuss any outstanding issues and to expedite placement of the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,


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